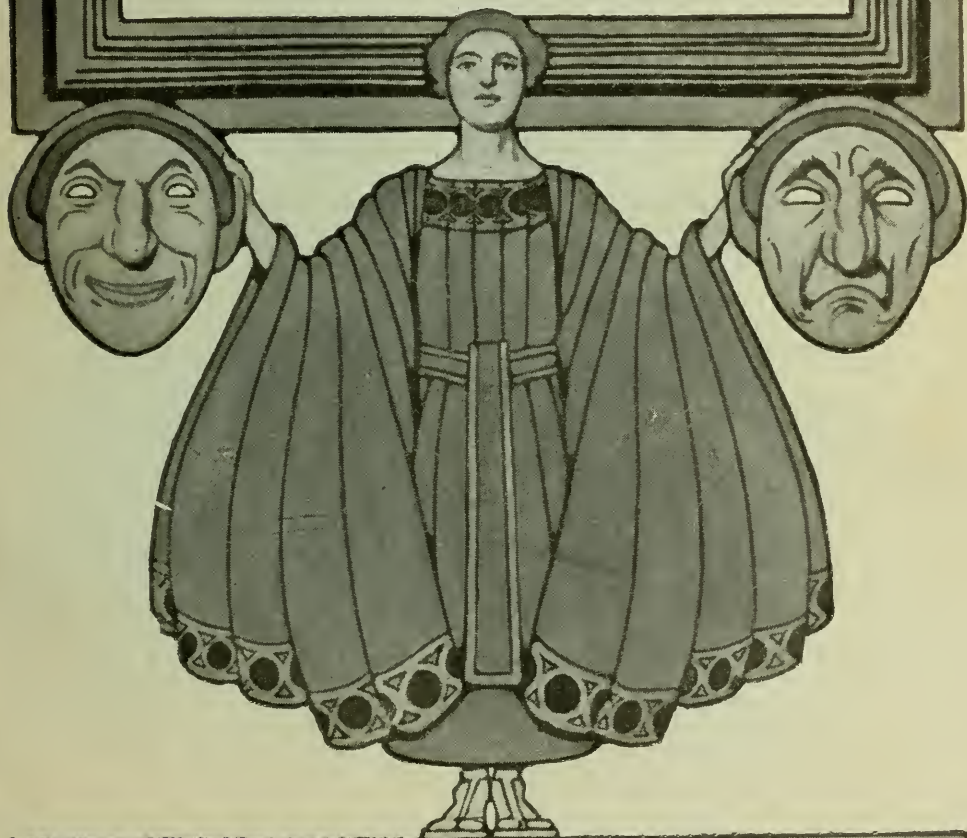


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The Child Moses

Lily M. Leaman



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THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY
PHILADELPHIA

The Child Moses

A Biblical Play

By

LILY M. LEAMAN



PHILADELPHIA
THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY

1919

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The Child Moses

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CHARACTERS

AMRAM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>an Israelite</i>
JOCHEBED	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>his wife</i>
MIRIAM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>their daughter</i>
MOSES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>their infant son</i>
KHAI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>an Egyptian official</i>
THERMUTHIS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>the daughter of Pharaoh</i>
KILAGIPA	}	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>ladies of the king's household</i>
ZOUHARTI		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
NEFERT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>an Egyptian woman</i>
JAMBRES	}	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>sacred scribes of the king</i>
JANNES		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

TIME OF PLAYING.—Forty-five minutes.

STORY OF THE PLAY

The play is based upon the story told in the first chapter of Exodus. Sesostris, the Pharaoh or king of the Egyptians, holds the Hebrews in bondage. It has been foretold that among them shall arise a deliverer. To prevent this Pharaoh has decreed the death of all Hebrew baby boys. Amram and Jochebed have been hiding their infant son, but can conceal him no longer. They set him afloat on the river. He is found by the Egyptian princess, Thermuthis, who names him Moses. She needs a nurse for him and Miriam, the sister of Moses, suggests his own mother, Jochebed. Thus the family is miraculously reunited, and Amram predicts that Moses shall be the long expected deliverer of his race.

COSTUMES, ETC.

An excellent guide for costumes, etc., will be found by consulting any good illustrated Bible. Books showing costumes and ornaments of the ancient Hebrews and Egyptians may also be found in any public library.

All the characters should have dark hair and complexion. AMRAM should appear about thirty-five to forty years of age, JOCHEBED a little younger. MIRIAM is a child of about ten years. MOSES is an infant of three months. He may be a real infant, with dark hair, or a large doll may be used, carefully wrapped up, the face being kept turned from the audience and hidden by wrappings. KHAI is about thirty, and should have the look of an officer or soldier. THERMUTHIS, KILAGIPA (Keelagépa) and ZOUHARTI are all about twenty. THERMUTHIS should be a little more richly dressed than the other two, and should wear on her forehead the usual Egyptian mark of royalty (see books as noted above). KILAGIPA is selfish and cold.

ZOUHARTI is kind. NEFERT is about thirty, and should look like a servant. JAMBRES and JANNES are about forty and sixty, respectively. They are scribes, officers of Pharaoh's court, and of haughty manner. Their dress is white.

PROPERTIES

The ark or little boat in which MOSES is placed to be set afloat on the river. This may be made from any basket long enough to hold the infant or doll used for the part of MOSES. There should be no handle or cover to it. Soak newspapers in flour paste and cover the basket with them roughly, putting on several layers. Allow the basket thus covered to dry thoroughly, then apply one or more coats of black paint, to represent the "daubed pitch" referred to in the Bible and in the play. (The painted paper may easily be removed afterward, if desired, by soaking in warm water.)

The only other property required for the play is the necklace worn by TIERMUTHIS, and given by her to MOSES. A slender string of colored beads with a pendant of colored stone or of gold will serve. If a museum is near at hand it will pay to visit it in search of an actual Egyptian necklace, as well as for other effective touches of costume and stage setting.

SCENE PLOTS

SCENE I.—A room in the hut of AMRAM, the Hebrew. Any rude and simple interior will serve. There are doorways R. and L. in which should be hung plain curtains of cotton. Egyptian designs on these and on the walls will help the effect. The room has no furniture except a few cushions.

SCENE II.—An open space near the river. Background of soft buff, or light blue. Bushes up R. and L. and across the back, interspersed if possible with

straight reeds or rushes. Consult books on Egypt for scenes along the Nile. If painted scenery is used a rich effect can be obtained, with temples or pyramids in the distance and the river showing near at hand. But the play may be given effectively with the simple setting suggested above.

The Child Moses

SCENE I.—*A room in a Hebrew dwelling in Egypt in the time of Pharaoh Sesostris. A door up R. is the front entrance to the house, and another door down L. leads to a back room of the house.*

(At the rise of the curtain JOCHEBED, down L., is busy-ing herself over a little ark made of rushes. She works hastily, looking fearfully over her shoulder now and then toward R. MIRIAM is seated on a cushion, down R. In her arms she rocks the baby MOSES.)

MIRIAM (*sings or chants*).

Sleep my baby brother,
Egyptians watch thy mother.
We have built a little ark
To float thee in the river:
God will save his chosen one
His people to deliver.
Fear not, fear not,
Sleep, my baby brother.

(Enter AMRAM, R. As the curtain falls behind him he wheels suddenly around toward the way he has come, grasps the curtain cautiously, and peers out R. around the edge of it. JOCHEBED springs to her feet, locking her hands nervously.)

JOCHEBED (*in a low tone*). Ah, what is it? Are they coming?

(She crosses R. and tries to peer out around the curtain.)

AMRAM (*sternly, in a low voice*). Hush! (*They stand silent, while he still looks out at the edge of the curtain. Suddenly he straightens, relief showing in his face.*) There! She is gone!

JOCHEBED. Who—who?

AMRAM. The woman Shiprah. She followed me.

(*Looks out again.*)

JOCHEBED (*wringing her hands*). Oh, why does she persecute us?

AMRAM. She is an Egyptian. They do not love us Hebrews. Is the ark ready?

JOCHEBED (*clinging to his arm*). Oh, Amram, my husband, is there no other way?

AMRAM. None. (*Takes her in his arms.*) Pharaoh's law is cruel. Every male Hebrew babe must be cast into the river to perish. (*Leads her c.*)

JOCHEBED (*sobbing*). Oh, I cannot bear it—I cannot bear it.

AMRAM (*calming her*). Peace; you will bring them down on us. If they find him here we shall all die.

(MIRIAM, *crying, rises and carries baby off L.*)

JOCHEBED. But can I not keep him for one more day—my beautiful baby?

AMRAM. Ye know the law. It may mean death for us all.

JOCHEBED. But one day—one day!

AMRAM. For three months have we hidden him from the prying eyes of the Egyptians. Each day his voice grows stronger. The woman Shiprah is ever on the watch.

JOCHEBED (*weeping*). I shall never see him again.

AMRAM. It shall be as the Lord wills. We will secretly set him afloat on the river in the little ark. If the Lord wills, he may return to us.

JOCHEBED. I would gladly die to save him.

AMRAM. I know thou wouldst; but thy dying would not save him.

JOCHEBED (*fiercely*). With our baby boys all killed

we shall soon be but a nation of women, helpless slaves of Egypt's heartless king.

AMRAM. The Lord will repay, in his good time. Remember, he has promised us a deliverer. It is the fear of him that causes Pharaoh to take this cruel precaution. But he will come,—he will come!

JOCHEBED. From whence will he come?

AMRAM. The Lord our God knoweth. Even now he may be on the way.

JOCHEBED (*weeping*). Too late to save my boy!

AMRAM. Courage, Jochebed, courage. Is it not hard for me also? Come, it must be done.

(MIRIAM, *carrying the baby, appears at L.*)

MIRIAM. Oh, let us keep him, father. I will watch and watch, and when I see an Egyptian coming, I will sing or call and mother will know and will hide. Please, let us keep him.

AMRAM (*sadly*). It is useless, my child. We must send him away, or surely lose him. To-day the wicked prevail against us. Yet the God of our fathers is strong. The trials of to-day may be but the preparation of the joys of to-morrow. Come, Jochebed, put him into the ark.

JOCHEBED (*taking the baby from MIRIAM*). So Abraham laid his son Isaac on the altar. Oh, my little lamb! God save thee!

(JOCHEBED *kisses her child and lays it in the ark, down c.*)

AMRAM. Out of the pit into which his brothers threw him, out of the bondage into which his brothers sold him, God brought Joseph at last to glory and honor. So will God fulfill his promises. (*He kneels and kisses the baby, then turns to JOCHEBED.*) The ark is water tight?

JOCHEBED. It is so daubed with pitch and slime that not a drop of water could find its way to harm my babe.

MIRIAM. And, father, see how soft we made the little bed.

AMRAM (*rising*). Now, Miriam, take the ark and lay it gently in the water. God will guide the little boat. No harm shall come to brother. Have faith, my wife. And, Miriam, stay near the riverside and watch to see what happens.

(*He gives the ark into MIRIAM's hands.*)

JOCHEBED. I must go too.

AMRAM. If thou art seen thou mayest arouse suspicions. Ye might be followed by one of Egypt's spying women, by cruel Shiprah, who would drag the child from its ark and throw it helpless into the current. Miriam alone may not be noticed.

JOCHEBED. She might drop it.

(*She takes the ark from MIRIAM.*)

MIRIAM. Why, mother, haven't I cared for brother almost as much as thou? I couldn't drop him!

JOCHEBED. Thou mightest stumble! Thou mightest tip the bulrush cradle when thou settest it in the water.

AMRAM. It is too great a risk for thee to go. Stay here with me and trust to Miriam.

JOCHEBED. If my child must be given to the mercy of the river, I myself will place him in the stream. Do not prevent me, Amram, for I must see him safe afloat. None but mother, little son, shall speed thee on thy journey.

AMRAM. Hasten, then. Go out by the back way, and glide among the bushes and the reeds, and take good care that no one mark thy course. As soon as possible come back, and Miriam will keep watch and bring us word if anything shall happen. (*JOCHEBED with the ark in her arms goes out L., followed by MIRIAM.*) My little son, my only one! (*Kneels L. c.*) Oh, God of Israel, have compassion on Thy people, who have in no way transgressed the laws of Thy worship; deliver them from the miseries that they endure, and let not the nation perish at the hands of the enemies who seek to destroy it.

(*KHAI bursts in at the door, R.*)

KHAI. What, Amram, still praying to the God who leaves you all in bondage to the worshipers of Osiris and Ra?

AMRAM (*rising*). Our God shall yet deliver us.

KHAI. Oh, touching faith! Much comfort may it give thee.

AMRAM. It gives us strength to live.

KHAI. If Pharaoh first permit it. Art thou alone?

AMRAM. I am. What is it that thou wishest?

KHAI. I am here to take you all. Thou, thy wife and daughter—and thy son!

AMRAM. What dost thou mean?

KHAI. Art thou not hiding here a new-born babe? Thou knowest the penalty. We have been watching thee for some time, and to-day wife Shiprah, passing by thy hut, declared she heard a baby cry, and straightway brought me word. Deliver up the child!

AMRAM (*raising his hands in prayer*). Lord God of Israel——

KHAI. Pray on to thy deaf God.

AMRAM. He hears my prayer.

KHAI. Where is the child? If thou dost not give him up immediately I shall make a search, and if I find that thou hast dared to break our Pharaoh's law, then thou shalt die, with all thy household.

AMRAM. Khai, thou hast often shown me kindness.

KHAI. I had no cause to hate thee. Thou hast been obedient to our king. Thou art both wise and learned. Thou art a man whom I could love if thou wert of our race. Although I do believe in all the gods of Egypt, I cannot quite despise thy steadfast faith in thy one God. Yet if thou hast sought to hide a boy, defying thus my king, I shall not spare thee, neither thee nor thine. Must I proceed to search? Give up the child to be cast into the river, and save thyself.

AMRAM. A noble action, truly!

KHAI. To save thy wife and daughter, then.

AMRAM. How can I give what I have not?

KHAI. Dost thou say that here there hath been no son born?

AMRAM. I tell thee, Khai, I cannot give what I have not.

KHAI. I'll waste no time in senseless words. I'll search the house and satisfy myself.

(Exit KHAI, L.)

AMRAM. Search on and take thy time. Oh, Jochebed, make haste! He soon will ask for thee. The river is more kind than one of Pharaoh's servants. There is a chance of safety in the stream; somewhere the little ark may find a place to rest. Some one must rescue it. Why doth not Jochebed come back? How shall I prevent Khai from going out in search of her when he finds out the truth?

(Enter KHAI, L.)

KHAI. Where is thy wife?

AMRAM. She should be here. She cannot be far away. She was here a very little while ago.

KHAI. Where is she now? Where did she go? Did she take her child with her?

AMRAM. She should be here by now.

KHAI. Must I go forth and search for her?

AMRAM. Canst thou not wait a little while? I am sure she will be here—oh, very, very soon.

KHAI. Why dost thou wish to keep me here?

AMRAM. To see my wife. Thou wishest to see my wife?

KHAI. To see thy wife! This talk is useless.

AMRAM. Is it? I did not think it so. Shall I go forth to find my wife?

KHAI. To warn her? No, we will wait together her return.

(KHAI takes a position near the door at L., with his back against the wall at L. AMRAM crosses R. and stands against the wall R. opposite the door L. JOCHEBED enters L. and, rushing toward her husband, does not see KHAI. She speaks before AMRAM can warn her.)

JOCHEBED. Oh, Amram, our little son.

(KHAI *steps forward and confronts her.*)

KHAI (L.). Our little son! I knew it!

JOCHEBED (R. C.). What have I said?

KHAI. The truth. Where is thy little son? Where hast thou hidden him? Give up thy son, in Pharaoh's name. He must be cast into the river, according to the law.

JOCHEBED. I cannot give what I have given.

KHAI. What dost thou mean?

JOCHEBED. I have given him to the river.

KHAI (*starting forward*). To the river!

JOCHEBED. Aye—was not that the king's command? Amram, Amram, I saw my baby carried away down the stream. My little one, my lamb, our only, only son!

KHAI. A mother weeping for her child—a sad, but common sight these days! Amram, Pharaoh is strong; it is well to obey his commands.

AMRAM. Our God is stronger.

KHAI. What wondrous faith! Comfort thy wife!

(*Exit KHAI R., while AMRAM comforts the weeping JOCHEBED.*)

JOCHEBED. Oh, my boy, my boy!

AMRAM. He is in God's hands, beloved. In His own good time —

CURTAIN

SCENE II.—*A wooded place near the margin of the river. There are bushes and tall rushes up R. and C. and L.*

(*Enter MIRIAM L. She is stealing softly across to R. when she looks off L., then runs up L. and hides herself behind a bush as THERMUTHIS, followed by ZOUHARTI and KILAGIPA enters down L.*)

THERMUTHIS (*pausing R. C. and looking off R.*). Just here we saw the ibis yesterday, feeding her young.

ZOUHARTI (C.). I do hope we shall see her again. The fledglings are so cunning.

KILAGIPA (L. C.). I like to see the worms and snakes wriggling in the beak of the bird. Their twistings are so funny.

THERMUTHIS. Dost thou not feel sorry for the snakes?

KILAGIPA. Why should I waste pity on a worm?

THERMUTHIS. Thou hast never wasted sympathy on anything, Kilagipa. I love a mother bird!

ZOUHARTI (*looking off R.*). Look over there, Princess; there is something caught among the reeds.

(*Points R.*)

THERMUTHIS. It looks like a basket. What dost thou think it is?

KILAGIPA. There is something alive in it. I saw it move.

ZOUHARTI. I think I can reach it. Shall I try?

THERMUTHIS. Yes, do! (ZOUHARTI *goes out R.*) This strange old river, always flowing on and always bringing some new interest to us. (*Looking off R.*) Look, Zouharti has the basket and she is smiling down at it.

KILAGIPA. Zouharti always smiles. Didst thou not see something move above the edge?

THERMUTHIS. What is it, Zouharti?

(ZOUHARTI *enters R. with the ark in her arms. The others go to her.*)

ZOUHARTI. Guess!

(MIRIAM *slips out of her hiding place and shyly comes down L. C.*)

THERMUTHIS (R. C.). A baby! Give it to me! Poor little child, it is frightened! One of the Hebrew mothers has tried to save her son. (*She takes the ark.*) How big he is! How did the mother manage to hide him so long?

KILAGIPA (c.). Throw it back into the water! Remember Pharaoh's edict!

ZOUHARTI (r.). Kilagipa!

THERMUTHIS. The river has refused him, and has given him to me.

ZOUHARTI (*notices MIRIAM*). Come here, little girl, and see the pretty fish I have just dipped out of the river.

(*MIRIAM crosses R. to her. NEFERT enters down L.*)

THERMUTHIS. We must have a nurse!

KILAGIPA. Why?

MIRIAM. What a lovely little baby!

ZOUHARTI. There is Nefert, my maid before she married. Come here, Nefert.

(*NEFERT goes toward R. and looks at the baby, who is still in the ark.*)

NEFERT. A little Hebrew baby!

ZOUHARTI. Thou hast a child, hast thou not, Nefert?

NEFERT. Yes, my lady.

ZOUHARTI. Thermuthis, here is Nefert, who hath a little child.

THERMUTHIS. I cannot quiet the child. Nefert, take it in thy arms and see what thou canst do to soothe it.

(*NEFERT takes baby from the ark, throwing the latter up into the bushes.*)

MIRIAM (l. c.). The baby does not seem to like Egyptians!

THERMUTHIS. What didst thou say?

MIRIAM. Oh, pardon me, great Princess, the little Hebrew child, perhaps it wanteth a Hebrew mother—and there are many Hebrew mothers would like a little child.

THERMUTHIS. Thou art a clever little girl. Go fetch a woman.

MIRIAM. I go, Princess.

(MIRIAM runs quickly off at L.)

KILAGIPA. What nonsense this! Thou surely dost not mean to keep the brat!

THERMUTHIS. Thou must not call him such names. I have no child. (*Taking the baby from NEFERT and cuddling it.*) The river gave me this boy and I shall keep him, my little Mo-üses. (*Enter JANNES and JAMBRES, slowly, at L. THERMUTHIS, not seeing the scribes.*) What soft dark rings of downy hair! Such large black eyes! Such wrinkly, dimpled fatness. See, Zouharti, how his curly fingers hold on to mine.

NEFERT. My little one is needing me.

(*She goes out L.*)

KILAGIPA (*moving toward the scribes*). The Princess hath fished a Hebrew youngster out of the Mo. She calls him Moüses, and means to keep him.

JANNES (L. C.). That is against the king's decree.

JAMBRES (L.). A woman's foolishness may defeat the foresight of a seer.

JANNES. Let us look at the child.

JAMBRES. Touch him not. I have a presentiment that evil will come of this.

(THERMUTHIS and ZOUHARTI laugh.)

THERMUTHIS. Evil! What evil? It is only a babe. See for thyself. Is he not wonderful?

(*Holds the baby toward the scribes.*)

JAMBRES. Heed the warning that I gave the King. This may be the child who shall deliver the Israelites from our power, and bring our dominion low.

THERMUTHIS (*laughs*). How foolish to fear a little helpless babe!

JAMBRES. When the Gods have warned us, we should take care.

JANNES. Thy father is a wise and cautious man, Princess. What is the use of killing a thousand babies, and then keeping one who may grow up and fulfill the prophecy?

KILAGIPA. That is right. We should not take such a risk!

THERMUTHIS. This little one shall grow up in my care, and he shall learn to love me as a mother. No harm can come of that!

ZOUHARTI. Our care and tenderness will make him an Egyptian.

KILAGIPA. Can ye change the leopard's spots?

JAMBRES. The King has issued his commands. Give me the child. He must be thrown again into the river. (*He steps toward THERMUTHIS.*)

THERMUTHIS (*retreating R.*). Thou shalt not touch him. (*JAMBRES touches the baby.*) Take thy hands away.

JAMBRES (*R. C.*). I touched him, and in that moment I knew! Thermuthis, this is the one foretold, and if thou rearest him, he will bring great trouble to our nation. I warn thee.

THERMUTHIS (*R.*). Why should I heed thy warning? If thou couldst tell that this is he, why hath my father killed a thousand innocents, and left a thousand Hebrew mothers to fill this lovely land with their lamentations?

(*THERMUTHIS carries the baby up R., followed by ZOUHARTI. JAMBRES crosses to L. KILAGIPA follows him.*)

KILAGIPA (*aside to the scribes*). She hath sent for a Hebrew woman to nurse him. Persuade her to find an Egyptian wife who will see to it that the child is properly disposed of.

JANNES. An excellent idea!

JAMBRES (*softly*). Thermuthis——

THERMUTHIS (*with her back to the scribes, answers over her shoulder*). Do not try to argue with me more. I won't give up this treasure!

JAMBRES (*approaching her up R.*). Art thou sure thy father wilt not forbid thee keeping it?

THERMUTHIS (*turning*). He never yet denied me anything my heart desired.

JAMBRES (*coaxingly*). Thou wilt want a nurse, of course. I know an excellent mother, named Puah. Shall I send for her? She is a good Egyptian, who knoweth all the customs and legends of our people, and she will bring up the child in our ways.

THERMUTHIS. Thou knowest her well?

JAMBRES. Yes, very well. She often comes to talk with me, and learn the sacred things.

THERMUTHIS. I have a nurse already.

JAMBRES (*up R. C.*). Who is she? An Egyptian?

THERMUTHIS. No, a Hebrew.

JANNES (*down L.*). A Hebrew! This is madness.

JAMBRES. Thou dost not mean that thou wilt take a Hebrew woman to nurse this Hebrew child. The mighty one, thy father, will not permit it.

THERMUTHIS. I think he will.

JAMBRES. I shall see him and warn him. I shall persuade him that this thing is dangerous. He values my advice.

THERMUTHIS. He values more my love and happiness, and I shall see him first.

JAMBRES. Thou saith that thou wouldst have this boy grow up thy son; then choose a woman who will know how to instil in him Egyptian manners and ideals. An Israelite may teach him to hate our nation and thee—his foster mother!

THERMUTHIS. An Israelite will love him and give him watchful care. Who knows? The woman of thy choice might do thy will and kill him.

JANNES. What use to reason with a wilful woman! Let us go. (*Crosses R.*)

JAMBRES (*coming down C.*). Swayed by emotion, reasonless, and unreasonable, forever upsetting the wise and thoughtful plans of man, this is woman. (*Turns to THERMUTHIS.*) Thermuthis, thou wilt rue this day!

THERMUTHIS. Perhaps!

(The two scribes pass out down R. KILAGIPA goes up L., while MIRIAM and JOCHEBED enter down L.)

ZOUHARTI. See, the little girl returneth, bringing with her a woman.

MIRIAM. Most high and noble Princess, here is Jochebed, who hath lately lost her son. She will be glad to care for the beautiful little boy baby.

THERMUTHIS *(coming down c. with baby, followed by ZOUHARTI)*. Dry thy tears, my woman, and give thy mother love to this little stranger, and I will pay thee well. *(She gives baby to JOCHEBED.)*

JOCHEBED. He looks a healthy, well-formed child. Ah, my little one!

ZOUHARTI. Forget thy little one in loving this.

THERMUTHIS. Perhaps thou hadst better take him home with thee to-night. To-morrow, bring him to the palace, and we will make arrangements for his care.

JOCHEBED. If I am found with a child, a Hebrew child, no questions will be asked, but Khai or Shiprah will straightway destroy him.

KILAGIPA *(up c.)*. Yes, they know their duty; they are good and faithful servants of the King.

(She comes down R.)

ZOUHARTI *(down R. c.)*. Put thy amulet upon his neck, for everybody knoweth the royal jewel, and none will dare to harm him.

KILAGIPA. What! put thy jewels upon an Israelite, the condemned child of a bondsman?

THERMUTHIS *(c., taking off her necklace and fastening it around the neck of MOSES)*. Thou art a dear sweet counselor, Zouharti. This will protect him even as I myself. Farewell, my Moïses, my pretty water baby, my beautiful boy, my son! *(She kisses baby.)*

KILAGIPA. What gushing nonsense!

ZOUHARTI. How contented the darling lies in Jochebed's arms.

THERMUTHIS. Remember, Jochebed, to bring him

to me early in the morning. Come, Zouharti, and Kilagipa.

(THERMUTHIS and ZOUHARTI pass out R. KILAGIPA pauses a moment, scowling at the child in JOCHEBED'S arms. Then she too goes out R., leaving JOCHEBED, MIRIAM, and the baby, at c.)

MIRIAM (*joyfully*). Oh, he is ours again! He is ours, my baby brother!

JOCHEBED. Thou hast done well, my child.

(*Enter AMRAM, L.*)

AMRAM. Jochebed! Miriam! What hast thou there? (*He approaches them.*)

JOCHEBED (*going to him*). See, our son is returned to us.

AMRAM (*looking around fearfully*). Why hast thou done this? They will kill him!

JOCHEBED. Nay, he is safe, safe. Look here.

(*She lifts the amulet and shows it.*)

AMRAM. The amulet of the Princess! How comes it there on the child's neck?

JOCHEBED. The Princess found him and has adopted him. She hath named him Moses. I too name thee Moses. (*She kisses the baby. To her husband.*) His life is safe. No Egyptian can touch him now.

AMRAM (*amazed, then joyful*). Thou art right. (*Then in an awed voice.*) Jochebed, dost thou see what this means?

JOCHEBED. Ay, truly, that my son is returned as from the dead.

AMRAM. It is a miracle!

JOCHEBED AND MIRIAM (*awed*). A miracle?

AMRAM. Aye; it is the Lord's doing. This child (*touches the baby*) is the promised Deliverer. It must be so.

JOCHEBED (*looking at him with wide eyes*). Amram! Our son, the Deliverer of his people!

AMRAM. The sign is plain. How wondrous are God's ways. He hath used the daughter of Pharaoh to spoil her father's plans. Through this child shall the Egyptians be brought low! Surely the God of Abraham will keep His covenant to the children of Israel!

(JOHEBED *sinks to one knee, gazing raptly at the baby.*

MIRIAM *bends over the baby, touching it reverently. Above them stands AMRAM, with uplifted hands and his lips moving as in prayer. The look on his face is as though he sees a vision.*)

CURTAIN



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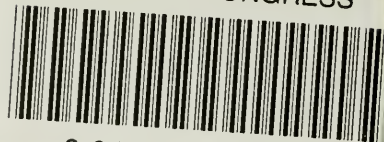
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